

There is no reason in the world it will not continue to drop unless we get some supplementary type of irrigation, such as surface water. That in turn in my opinion, in the opinion of the Conservation and Survey Division, will have the same effect and it will recharge this underground water not only in that area that is being depleted but far beyond that. For that reason, I cannot see where Nebraska could do anything else in the world except support this project. Let me go on a little bit further and say this, that long-term irrigation utilizing surface water on any major scale means water storage. There is no other way. Now the same is true for the groundwater irrigator. When surface or groundwater users consistently use more water than is being stored in the surface water reservoir like the O'Neill, we're just simply going to run out of water. Much of Nebraska's pump irrigator area is fortunate in that 50 to 100 feet of water bearing gravels under the heavily pumped irrigator areas which is the plus for the State of Nebraska. In other words, if we have a good underground reservoir, the problem is that these reservoirs are being used to a degree that recharges not keeping up with the withdrawal. As a result, we are experiencing a falling water table with a distinct future possibility of a forced return to dryland agriculture. Now, since Nebraska's economy is based largely, at least, on irrigated agriculture, it is imperative that solutions be found. This is one of the solutions. Without the storage of water both on the surface and underground, we can predict that Nebraska is heading for some real trouble in the foreseeable future. Storage is a key. Now what will it do? Number one, it will provide adequate service for our surface water users. Number two, it will provide groundwater recharge for the pump water irrigators. Number three, it will result in flowing streams. I want you to pay attention to this; this has been demonstrated again in Tri-County. It will result in flowing streams instead of losing streams. And fourth, it will allow both ground and surface water irrigators to survive a lengthy drouth by placing water in a reservoir that doesn't lose water by evaporation when it is underground and it doesn't require a great maintenance cost. I say the greatest asset we have in this project is the underground water recharge and storage. I beg of you that if you've paid any attention to what has happened in Nebraska in our economy because of irrigation and what is going to happen, if we do not store some of this water we can foresee nothing but some real problems. I think it is fundamentally necessary in view of the fact that tomorrow is the hearing in Washington, that this body takes action today and does like it has in the past and support this project. Thank you.

SPEAKER LUEDTKE: The question is the adoption of LR 22 which the vote will be the final vote. This is a policy type resolution. This is not being considered as a bill across the board. This will be the vote for adopting the resolution. It requires 25 votes. All those in favor will vote aye, opposed nay. Have you all voted? Record the vote.

CLERK: 28 ayes, 2 nays, 19 not voting.

SPEAKER LUEDTKE: The resolution is adopted.

CLERK: Mr. President, I move to place LB 202 from the Banking Committee and place it on General File. Signed Senator Simon. That will be read and laid over Mr. President. That's all I have Mr. President.